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ABSTRACT

This booklet provides guidance for implementing a standards policy in North Carolina. In 1997, the Committee on Standards and Accountability was created by the North Carolina General Assembly to advise the State Board of Education on a policy for student performance standards. The committee was charged with considering standards for promotion for elementary, middle, and high school grades, and grade-level student proficiency benchmarks for entrance into college or into the work force. One of the first actions taken by the committee was to support six cornerstone competencies: (1) communication; (2) using numbers and data; (3) processing information; (4) problem solving; (5) technology; and (6) teamwork. With these and other recommendations in mind, a policy was developed. The contents of this guide include the final policy; implementation suggestions for superintendents, local boards of education, central-office staff, and teachers; action plans for implementation at the LEA and school levels; words of advice from superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents; and key points and recommended topics for professional development. Also included in the guide is a large number of sample forms covering a wide variety of school issues. (WFA)

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Student Accountability Standards

Implementation Guide

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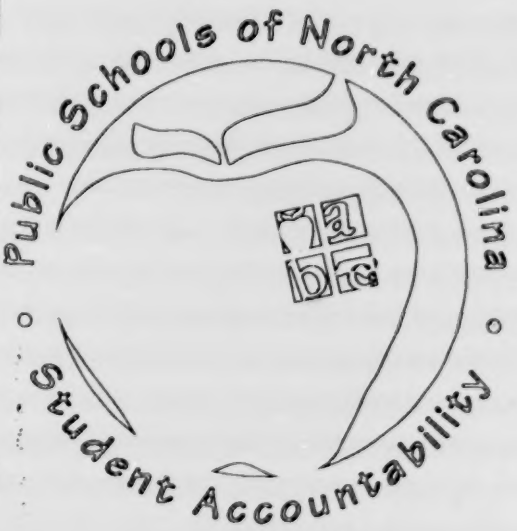

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Foreword

All students can learn. Appropriate instruction, support, and adequate time enable students to meet achievement goals. North Carolina is recognized as a national leader in holding schools accountable for student achievement. *Education Week* recently recognized North Carolina as one of only two states that comes close to having all the components of a complete accountability system. The ABCs of Public Education is the state mechanism that holds school districts, schools, and educators accountable for student achievement. With the addition of the Student Accountability Standards, the state has taken the next step forward in holding students more accountable for their achievement. The new policy is expected to support early identification of students who need help to reach grade level and to provide interventions and acceleration for students so they are prepared for the next level of schooling.

In many instances, the Student Accountability Standards have been called promotion and retention standards, or shared accountability. "Shared accountability" includes teachers, principals, parents, central office staff, and students. Many educators have been concerned that large numbers of students, especially minority children, would be retained as a result of the policy. Just as the ABCs spotlights high achieving individual schools while identifying those that need additional assistance and resources, the Student Accountability Standards will focus on high-achieving students as well as those who need intensive, quality interventions to reach grade level proficiency. Rather than being seen as a "retention" policy, if properly implemented, the Student Accountability Standards will ensure that every child has the required services and support to perform on grade level.

The Student Accountability Standards will only be effective if they are implemented completely, with the best interest of students at heart, with the involvement of all stakeholders, and with great care. It is important that schools continue seeking ways to improve the academic achievement of students performing at Levels I and II and that interventions be provided as soon as the need is identified. Assistance and intervention should be viewed on a continuum of services. Instruction in the *Standard Course of Study* using a variety of teaching strategies must serve as a foundation for learning. Diverse and individualized instruction must be provided for each student, even though the end point will vary for each student. Suggestions for intervention strategies can be found in a number of publications from the Department of Public Instruction, including an October 1999 publication entitled *Intervention Strategies*.

In some cases, the Student Accountability Standards provide specific guidelines; in others local control and decision-making are more appropriate. This manual is intended to provide guidance to schools and LEAs in both of those areas as they implement the Student Accountability Standards.

Background

The Committee on Standards and Accountability was created by the General Assembly in July 1997 to "advise the State Board of Education on student performance standards." Specifically, the Committee was charged with considering three primary areas.

1. What should be the promotion standards for elementary, middle, and high school grades?
2. Consider the recommendations of the Education Standards and Accountability Commission.
3. Address G.S. 115C-12 requirements that "the Board shall develop a plan to implement high school exit exams, grade-level student proficiency benchmarks for academic courses required for admission to constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina and student proficiency benchmarks for the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the workforce.

The Committee on Standards and Accountability established several guiding principles that form the basis for recommendations. The Committee determined that student accountability standards must be

- legally defensible;
- help improve student achievement by having feedback and opportunities to meet high standards;
- ensure that decisions are based on a rich, valid, and reliable collection of evidence;
- ensure that local school-based personnel have input in making decisions about student promotion;
- ensure local school system responsibility for intervention and appeals procedures;
- have multiple assessments with an array of evidence of proficiency;
- build on the existing ABCs accountability model; and
- involve a total process of content, performance, and intervention.

One of the first actions taken by the Committee was to support the six cornerstone competencies determined by the Education Standards and Accountability Commission and later adopted by the State Board as graduation competencies. These competencies are

- communication,
- using numbers and data,
- processing information,
- problem solving,
- technology, and
- teamwork.

The committee also recommended four gateways through which students must pass in order to move to the next level and that appropriate intervention be available to all students to eliminate barriers that may prevent students from reaching proficiency levels. While the ultimate goal is for all students to reach proficiency and not be retained, it is important to keep in mind that "more of the same" will not work for students who are retained. Intervention strategies for these students need to be innovative and matched to individual student needs.

With these recommendations in mind, a draft policy was developed. As discussions continued, the original draft was developed and revised to reflect current thinking and input from parents, educators, business representatives, special interest groups, and other community members. This information was gathered through public input sessions, meetings of the State Board of Education, telephone conference calls, telecommunications sessions, and written correspondence. The final policy evolved from this extensive input and was adopted by the State Board on April 1, 1999.

The success of helping students reach proficiency levels will be affected by the variety of instructional options and intervention available, professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and the degree to which standards and expectations are communicated clearly to students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders.

The task currently at hand is implementation of the Student Accountability Standards. Just as the policy could not have been developed without extensive involvement of all stakeholders, likewise implementation at the local level must have extensive input from all stakeholders. We also have the benefit of learning from LEAs that have student accountability standards in place. This guide is intended to synthesize the knowledge gained from the experiences of those LEAs and to provide guidance in making the policy a benefit to all children in the state.

Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion:
A Guide for Educators and State and Local Leaders

On July 1, the United States Department of Education released a 72-page guidebook designed to help schools find ways to end social promotion. *Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion: A Guide for Educators and State and Local Leaders* answers several key questions: What is social promotion? How widespread is it? What are the costs to students and society?

In addition to answering these questions, the majority of the document is devoted to strategies schools and communities may want to consider when ending social promotion. The document also includes an inventory of resources for ending social promotion. A copy of the full text of the document can be found online at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/socialpromotion/. The key strategies are outlined below.

I. Improve Classroom Instruction
   - A. Reduce class size to allow for more individualized attention and instruction
   - B. Set clear objectives for students to meet performance standards at key grades
   - C. Identify student needs early and apply appropriate instructional strategies
   - D. Focus on early childhood and readiness strategies
   - E. Provide professional development that deepens teachers' content knowledge and improves their teaching
   - F. Communicate expectations for all concerned, especially families and communities
   - G. Offer summer school for students who fail to meet high academic standards
   - H. Extend learning time through before- and after-school programs, homework centers, and year-round schooling
   - I. Keep students and teachers together for more than one year and use other effective student grouping practices

II. Take Responsibility
   - A. Set high standards of learning for all students
   - B. Create reliable measures of achievement against standards
   - C. Concentrate on providing high-quality curriculum and instruction for all students
   - D. Include families
   - E. Involve community stakeholders

III. Start Early
   A. Provide opportunities for preschool
   B. Emphasize early childhood and literacy programs

IV. Strengthen Learning Opportunities in the Classroom
   A. Identify and intervene early with students at risk of falling behind
   B. Ensure that there is a well-prepared teacher in every classroom
   C. Use research-based practices
   D. Reduce class size
   E. Accommodate students with special needs

V. Extend Learning Time
   A. Establish after-school programs
   B. Provide summer school for students not meeting standards
   C. Move toward year-round schooling

VI. Help Students Who Still Do Not Meet Standards
   A. Develop effective transition programs for students unprepared for promotion
   B. Prevent dropouts and help students realize postsecondary opportunities

VII. Hold Schools Accountable for Performance and Help Them Improve
   A. Require public reporting of school performance
   B. Intervene in low-performing schools
   C. Reward school improvement

Acknowledgements

The State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction wish to thank the superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents who shared their "words of advice" for other schools and LEAs as they implement the Student Accountability Standards. We also wish to thank the assistant superintendents/directors of instruction who provided input and suggestions on the content of professional development needed to be successful in helping all children become proficient in reading, writing, and mathematics. As we learn from their experiences, the task of implementing the standards statewide becomes easier for all of us.

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Contributors for Various Sample Forms

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Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools
Johnston County Schools

Statewide
Student Accountability Standards

SBE Policy Reference and ID No. 01A108
APA Policy 16CAC6D.0305
(Note: Bold type represents current policy in ID No. 01A108

North Carolina Statewide Student Accountability Standards Requirements

Grade-level Proficiency Guidelines

The following grade-level student accountability standards **are based on a belief in the need to provide early and ongoing assistance to students who need it. Our aim must be that all students have the reading and mathematics skills critical for participating in and benefiting from high school curricula in core academic and vocational areas.**

Standards

Elementary

Gateway 1

In addition to meeting local promotion requirements, students in grade 3 shall demonstrate proficiency by having test scores at Level III or above on end-of-grade tests in both reading and mathematics. Students scoring at Level III or above and meeting all local promotion requirements shall be promoted to grade 4 unless determined otherwise by the school principal, in consultation with teacher(s). See sections "Review Procedures," "Students with Disabilities," and "Students of Limited English Proficiency" for additional information, pages 3 and 8.

The effective date is **2001-2002**.

Gateway 2

In addition to meeting local promotion requirements, students in grade 5 shall demonstrate proficiency by having test scores at Level III or above on end-of-grade tests

in both reading and mathematics. Additionally, the grade 4 writing assessment shall be used as a screen to determine whether students are making adequate progress in developing writing skills. If a student has not scored at or above proficiency level 2.5 on the grade 4 writing assessment, the school shall provide intervention and assistance to develop writing skills. The principal and teacher(s) shall use locally developed and scored writing samples during grade 5 to determine if students have made adequate progress in order to be promoted to grade 6.

Students scoring at Level III or above on reading and mathematics, meeting all local promotion standards, and making adequate progress in writing shall be promoted to grade 6, unless determined otherwise by the school principal, in consultation with teacher(s). See sections "Review Procedures," "Students with Disabilities," and "Students of Limited English Proficiency" for additional information, pages 3 and 8.

The effective date is **2000-2001**.

Middle School – Gateway 3

In addition to meeting local promotion requirements, students in grade 8 shall demonstrate proficiency by having test scores at Level III or above on an end-of-grade test in both reading and mathematics. Additionally, the grade 7 writing assessment shall be used as a screen to determine whether students are making adequate progress in developing writing skills. If a student has not scored at or above proficiency level 2.5 on the grade 7 writing assessment, the school shall provide intervention and assistance to develop writing skills. The principal and teacher(s) shall use locally developed and scored writing samples during grade 8 to determine if students have made adequate progress to be promoted to grade 9.

Students scoring at Level III or above on reading and mathematics, meeting all local promotion standards, and making adequate progress in writing shall be promoted to grade 9 unless determined otherwise by the school principal, in consultation with teacher(s). See sections "Review Procedures," "Students with Disabilities," and "Students of Limited English Proficiency" for additional information, pages 3 and 8.

The effective date is **2001-2002**.

High School – Gateway 4

Students shall meet the following requirements to receive a North Carolina high school diploma.

1. Existing local and state graduation requirements

2. A passing score on an exit exam of essential skills. Students shall take this exam in the spring of the students' 11th grade year (**Effective date: Graduating Class of 2003.**)

3. A passing score on computer skills test (**Effective date: Graduating Class of 2001**).

See sections "Review Procedures," "Students with Disabilities," and "Students of Limited English Proficiency" for additional information, pages 3 and 8.

High School – Diploma Recognition

Any student receiving specified scores on English language arts and mathematics parts of the exit exams shall be eligible for recognition given as a part of the North Carolina Scholars Program. These specified scores are in addition to the existing North Carolina Scholars Program requirements.

The effective date is for the Graduating Class of 2003.

Review Procedures
Student Accountability

Each school district shall follow these procedures for students not meeting gateway standards.

Elementary

Gateway 1

For students not scoring at Level III or above on the reading and mathematics tests, the school district shall follow these procedures to determine if students are performing at grade level and able to succeed at the next grade:

1. Students scoring below Level III on an end-of-grade test are given a second test within a reasonable time from the receipt of test results. Parents may request that their child be excused from the second administration of the test. In this case, the parents and child accept participation in focused intervention.

2. Teachers or parents may request a promotion for students scoring below Level III on an end-of-grade test after the second or third test administration. Teachers shall provide documentation of the students' performance during a review process.

   Documentation may include

   a) Student work samples
   b) Other test data
   c) Information supplied by parents
   d) For students with disabilities, information that is included in the individualized education program (IEP)
   e) Other information that verifies that a student is at grade level. (Students with disabilities shall be at grade level or be making adequate progress to meet requirements at upper elementary levels.)

3. Students who are not promoted after the second or third administration of the test shall be given focused intervention of a time period that is instructionally sound. Strategies may include, but are not limited to, alternative learning models, special homework, smaller classes, tutorial sessions, extended school day, Saturday school, modified instructional programs, parental involvement, summer school instruction, or retention.

A committee shall be appointed to review student waiver requests. This committee, composed of teachers and principals from another school, shall make recommendations to the student's principal about whether the student should be promoted to the next grade. Central office staff may serve on the committee in lieu of a principal. This recommendation is based on documentation presented by teachers on behalf of the student.. Special education personnel shall be on the committee if a student with a disability is being considered for a wavier. Parents of any student being presented for review shall have the right to be a non-voting participant, and further shall have the right to speak on behalf of their child.

Gateway 2

For students not scoring at Level III or above on the reading and mathematics tests and not making adequate progress in developing writing skills, the school district shall follow these procedures to determine if students are performing at grade level and able to succeed at the next grade:

1. Students scoring below Level III on an end-of-grade test are given a second test within a reasonable time from the receipt of test results. Parents may request that their child be excused from the second administration of the test. In this case, the parents and child accept participation in focused intervention.

2. Teachers or parents may request a promotion for students scoring below Level III on an end-of-grade test after the second or third test administration. Teachers shall provide documentation of the students' performance during a review process.

   Documentation may include

   a) Student work samples
   b) Other test data
   c) Information supplied by parents
   d) For students with disabilities, information that is included in the individualized education program (IEP)
   e) Other information that verifies that a student is at grade level. (Students with disabilities shall be at grade level or be making adequate progress to meet requirements at upper elementary levels.)

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A committee shall be appointed to review student waiver requests. This committee, composed of teachers and a principal from another school, shall make recommendations to the student's principal about whether the student should be promoted to the next grade. Central office staff may serve on the committee in lieu of a principal. This recommendation is based on documentation presented by teachers on behalf of the student. Special education personnel shall be on the committee if a student with a disability is being considered for a wavier. Parents of any student being presented for review shall have the right to be a non-voting participant, and further shall have the right to speak on behalf of their child.

Middle School – Gateway 3

For students not scoring at Level III or above on the reading and mathematics tests and not making adequate progress in developing writing skills, the school district shall follow these procedures to determine if students are performing at grade level and able to succeed at the next level.

1. Students scoring Level III on an end-of-grade test are given a second test within a reasonable time from the receipt of test results. Parents may request that their child be excused from the second administration of the test. In this case, the parents and child accept participation in focused intervention.

2. Teachers or parents may request a promotion for students scoring below Level III on an end-of-grade test after the second or third test administration. Teachers shall provide documentation of the students' performance during a review process.

   Documentation may include

   a) Student work samples
   b) Other test data
   c) Information supplied by parents
   d) For students with disabilities, information that is included in the individualized education program (IEP)
   e) Other information that verifies that a student is at grade level. (Students with disabilities shall be at grade level or be making adequate progress to meet requirements at upper elementary levels.)

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A committee shall be appointed to review student waiver requests. This committee, composed of teachers and a principal from another school, shall make recommendations to the student's principal about whether the student should be promoted to the next grade. Central office staff may serve on the committee in lieu of a principal. This recommendation is based on documentation presented by teachers on behalf of the student. Special education personnel shall be on the committee if a student with a disability is being considered for a wavier. Parents of any student being presented for review shall have the right to be a non-voting participant, and further shall have the right to speak on behalf of their child.

Local Accountability Procedures

Promotion decisions shall be made according to local policy and discretion, but shall include statewide student accountability standards at grades 3, 5, and 8 and high school. At a minimum, each local board of education shall adopt procedures to ensure that students are treated fairly. The policy shall recognize the statutory authority of the principal to make promotion decisions.

Local boards of education policies shall be consistent with statewide student accountability policy. The policies should include: notification and involvement of parents and agreement of parental expectations signed by parents or guardians.

1. **Intervention**

School districts shall provide focused intervention to all students not meeting statewide student accountability standards. Such intervention shall involve extended instructional opportunities which are different and supplemental and which are specifically designed to improve the students' performance to grade level proficiency. Students not meeting the standards shall have personalized education plans with the following components:

a) diagnostic evaluation
b) intervention strategies
c) monitoring strategies

Strategies may include, but are not limited to, alternative learning models, special homework, smaller classes, tutorial sessions, extended school day, Saturday school, modified instructional programs, parental involvement, summer school instruction, or retention.

2. **Reporting**

The Department of Public Instruction shall provide a mechanism for LEAs and schools to report annually their progress in increasing the number of students who meet the standard for grade-level promotion. Percentages of students above grade-level proficiency and those who have moved from Level I to Level II shall be used to compare progress from year to year. Annually, local boards of education shall report the following information by race, ethnicity, exceptionality, and socio-economic status to the State Board of Education:

a) number and percent of students promoted by school who did not score at Level III or above on the designated tests at gateways 1, 2, and 3.
b) number and percent of students who have moved across achievement levels in reading and mathematics at gateways 1, 2, and 3.

3. **Standardized Transcript**

The NC standardized high school transcript certifies a level of proficiency in high school courses through both grades and test scores. Test scores should be recorded on the standardized transcript.

In order to inform parents and students of student progress, beginning with the 1995-96 school year, the transcript shall be issued to students at the end of each year.

4. **EOC Test Scores**

End-of-Course test results should* be used as part of the student's final grade. Beginning with the 1995-96 school year, local school systems should set policies regarding the use of End-of-Course tests results in assigning final grades.

**APA Policy 16NCAC6D.0305 changed "should" to "shall," effective November 1, 1997.*

Students with Disabilities

1. To the extent possible, all students with disabilities shall participate in the statewide student accountability standards for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

2. Students with disabilities may be exempted from the statewide student accountability promotion standards by the Individualized Education Program Team, including the principal or school district representative, if it is determined by the team that the students do not have the ability to participate in the State Standard Course of Study. However, they shall be enrolled in a functional curriculum and demonstrate acceptable outcomes on alternate assessments. These students may receive a certificate of achievement or graduation certificate.

3. All interventions/remediation and other opportunities, benefits, and resources that are made available to students without disabilities shall be made available to students with disabilities who participate in the student promotion standards. All services offered are in addition to the special education services provided to the student.

Students of Limited English Proficiency

Students of limited English proficiency shall meet the same standards as all students. However, in accordance with federal law, English language proficiency cannot be the factor that determines that a student has not met performance standards at each gateway. Therefore, the following guidelines must be used:

1. Students who are exempt from statewide testing in accordance with the *Guidelines for Testing Students with Limited English Proficiency* shall also be exempt from the test standard for passage through each of the gateways. Instead, an instructional containing documentation of the students' English language proficiency and progress in all academic areas shall be submitted to a local committee of teachers and administrators to determine if students area ready to be promoted to the next level.

2. Gateways 1, 2, and 3. Once limited English proficient students are no longer eligible for exemption from statewide testing, they may be eligible for a waiver up to two additional years. They may receive a waiver from the test standard at the gateway students first encounter if their English language proficiency is below "superior" in reading and writing. (See *Guidelines for Testing Students with Limited English Proficiency.*) A local committee of teachers and administrators shall examine the students' instructional portfolios to determine that

   a) the students' English language proficiency is the cause of their inability to perform at grade level on the required test
   b) documentation indicates that the students are making adequate progress in all academic areas to be promoted to the next level.

3. High School Graduation Requirements. Limited English proficient students shall meet the same standards as all students for high school graduation.

4. School districts shall provide focused intervention for these students until they have met statewide promotion standards and high school graduation requirement (up to age 21). This intervention shall involve extended, supplemental instructional opportunities which include assistance in the development of English language proficiency. These students shall have personalized education plans with the following components:

   a) diagnostic evaluation
   b) intervention strategies
   c) monitoring strategies.

Standard Error of Measurement

North Carolina Student Accountability Standards require that students in grades 3, 5 and 8 "demonstrate proficiency by having test scores at Level III or above on end-of-grade tests in both reading and mathematics." Because all tests have some degree of measurement error, students who score slightly below Level III may not differ in their proficiency from students who score at Level II. Therefore, for the implementation of Student Accountability Standards, the State Board of Education will credit students as having attained Level III in a subject if their score, plus one (1) standard error of measurement (SEM), is at or above Level III on the respective end-of-grade test.

To assist in identifying these students, the Division of Accountability Services will modify the scanning software to generate a list of students who meet the Student Accountability Standards with one or two SEMs. For further information on the use of two SEMs, please refer to item 4c on page 12, *Develop the Review Process*.

Implementation Suggestions For LEAs

Much of the leadership for implementation of the Student Accountability Standards will come from the superintendent, local board of education, and central office staff. This involves ensuring that schools understand the expectations and standards, communicating the policies (both local and state), suggesting appropriate intervention strategies and programs, and providing adequate resources for intervention and acceleration. It is also important to examine closely any local policies that are in place to determine the compatibility with the state standards. The steps below are suggested to implement the standards.

1. **Appoint a systemwide committee that represents all of the LEA's stakeholders.** This committee should include parents, teachers from all grade levels, students, administrators, local board members, supervisors, business representatives, and the general public and reflect diversity in gender, ethnicity, socio-economic levels of the community, geographical areas of the LEA, and diverse opinions related to the policy and procedures. The committee will provide advice, guidance, and input into recommendations to the local board of education on policies and procedures related to the standards.

   In order for districts to implement the student accountability standards successfully, all stakeholders must be involved and committed to improving student achievement. Forming a committee up front to work on implementation issues will prevent difficulties later on. The committee should meet regularly to discuss the issues as well as provide accurate and timely information to their colleagues on implementation plans. Meetings should be held at times that are convenient for the greatest number of committee members, and minutes should be recorded and available for public review.

2. **Review both state and local policies with committee members.** Determine where local policies are complementary and what changes and additions need to be made. Because many LEAs have promotion/retention policies in place, it is important to compare the local policy to the state policy. The state standards also recognize and respect the right of a local board of education to develop its own policies for other grade levels, to determine where discrepancies may exist, and to go beyond the state standards. Local policies may need to be expanded or modified to ensure compatibility with state standards for grades 3, 5, 8, and high school graduation. For continuous progress, LEAs may want to establish a student accountability policy for all grades to ensure adequate pre-preparation for the state gateways.

3. **Draft revisions to any local policies that may be needed.** Develop specific procedures relative to retesting, intervention, and appeals. After reviewing the existing policy, the stakeholders committee may want to draft a revised policy to review with the superintendent who will, in turn, provide appropriate input, and share a suggested revised proposal with the local board of education. The superintendent

will decide on presentation to, discussion with, and approval by the local board. Policies and procedures should be included. LEAs will want to specifically address the length of time between the first and second test administrations, interventions that should occur during this time, and the process for parents to request exemption from the second testing.

4. **Develop the appeals process.** There are several key points to consider.

   a) Decide on the make up of the appeals committee. It should be composed of teachers, administrators, and central office personnel. Decide if they are appointed and by whom they are appointed or if it is a volunteer process.
   b) Members of the appeals committee must be trained. The LEA may wish to select and train a pool of educators to serve on the appeals committee, and select committee members according to need. This would also include exceptional children's teachers and teachers of limited English proficient students. Larger school systems may want to establish grade level teams (3, 5, and 8). Training should include expectations of committee members, processes, and specific examples of work that is considered "on grade level" for grades 3, 5, and 8.
   c) Teachers must provide documentation of a student's performance to the appeals committee. The LEA must decide what documentation is acceptable for the appeals committee to use to make decisions about promotion/retention. This documentation may include, but is not limited to, student work samples, assessment data other than End-of-Grade, information supplied by parents, or information from the IEP (for students with disabilities). For purposes of the review procedures required in the Student Accountability Standards, a student's score, plus two (2) standard errors of measurement (SEM) maybe presented as part of the documentation furnished to the review committee.
   d) Establish a process to notify parents of the date, time, and location of the appeals committee meeting. This should include asking the parents/guardians if they plan to speak on behalf of the student. If parents are non-English speaking, efforts must be made to provide the information in the language they speak.
   e) Documentation of the entire appeals process should be kept on file at the student's home school. Sample forms are provided in the back of this guide.
   f) The appeals committee should be an objective group. Educators from a child's home school should not be voting members of the committee when the student's appeal is being heard. Small LEAs with one middle school may wish to use administrators and teachers with middle school certification and/or experience to serve on the team. It is suggested that service on the appeals committee be on a rotational basis so that there are some veteran committee members on the team each year. Decisions about length of service should be made at the LEA level.
   g) The appeals committee will make a recommendation to the school principal on the student's retention/promotion. The final decision rests with the principal.
   h) Establish other specific guidelines for the involvement of parents, as needed. This may include a parent/teacher/student contract. Sample contracts are included in the back of this guide.

5. **Decide on the LEA format for personalized education plans (PEPs), or determine if each school should develop its own format.** The LEA may also wish to develop guidelines (with input from the schools) on where and how PEPs and waiver forms should be filed. It is suggested that the PEP include

   - basic demographic information on the student;
   - diagnostic information such as proficiency level in reading and mathematics;
   - performance on the state writing test;
   - results of other assessments;
   - academic strengths and weaknesses;
   - weaknesses to be addressed with corresponding strategies, time line for strategies, resources needed, and method of assessment; and
   - documentation of monitoring and adjustments to the plan.

6. **Develop brochures/pamphlets that explain policies and procedures to stakeholders.** Develop a plan for dissemination and discussion with the community. Plan and conduct sessions on the policy and procedures for the community, school faculties, and students. Successful implementation will depend upon stakeholders understanding the policy and understanding that there are processes for appeals and for providing the assistance students may need to reach proficiency.

7. **Provide ongoing professional development for teachers on appropriate intervention and acceleration strategies to help all students reach proficiency.** Simply retaining a student to do the same things over again in the same grade will not improve proficiency. Teachers need extensive, indepth training in teaching the *Standard Course of Study*, diagnosing student needs, providing appropriate intervention, and monitoring student progress. It is important that schools and LEAs not get caught in the latest "fad" or "flavor of the month," but that teachers have the opportunity for **sustained** professional development in areas identified by needs surveys and analysis of test data. It is unlikely that one or two brief professional development sessions will provide the knowledge, skills, coaching, or on-site assistance that a teacher needs to implement a new instructional strategy in the classroom.

8. **Disaggregate all student test data (End-of-Grade/Course, assessment, etc.) to determine areas students have mastered and areas that may need additional attention.** Also, look at student achievement by gender and ethnicity. LEAs and schools must report annually to the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction their progress in increasing the number of students who meet the standard for grade-level promotion. LEAs and schools must use percentages of students who are above grade-level proficiency and of those who have moved from Level I to Level II to compare progress from year-to-year. Information must be reported by race, ethnicity, exceptionality, and socio-economic status. Specific information to be reported is

a) number and percent of students promoted by school who did not score at Level III or above on the designated gateways 1, 2, and 3;
b) number and percent of students who have moved across achievement levels, and
c) levels in reading and mathematics at gateways 1, 2, and 3.

By disaggregating data, teachers and principals can identify those areas that are common needs schoolwide and which are specific by class, gender, and/or ethnicity. These can be included in the school improvement plan so that all teachers (including those who **do not teach** reading, writing, and mathematics) can plan to reinforce the basic skills in their instruction. It is also important to look for patterns and trends over time to determine continuing weaknesses as well as which areas may be strong and/or weak as students enter the school from the feeder school(s).

9. **Review policies and procedures annually to determine revisions that are needed and additional professional development that would be helpful to teachers.** As the student accountability policy is implemented, teachers will identify needs for indepth study as well as procedures that may need to be refined. It is important to remember that the procedures should seek to hold students to high standards of performance while providing an accurate assessment of their knowledge and skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Action Plan For Implementing Student Accountability Standards At The District Level

LEA: _____ **Person Responsible:** _____

Action Steps			Evaluation	
Action	**By Whom and When**	**Needed Resources**	**Evidence of Progress**	**Completion Date**
Appoint a systemwide committee of stakeholders				
Convene committee and set dates for future meetings				
Review and compare local and state student accountability standards.				
Develop or draft revised local policy, as needed, and develop procedures for implementation. Present to local superintendent for discussion with local board				
Develop the appeals process				

Action Steps			Evaluation	
Action	**By Whom and When**	**Needed Resources**	**Evidence of Progress**	**Completion Date**
Define parental expectations and draft parent/student/teacher contract				
Establish timeframe for second testing				
Develop a pool of educators to serve on review committee(s) to include exceptional children's teachers and teachers of limited English proficient students				
Define the role of teachers/principal in presenting information to the review committee				
Train review committee members to include the process, what grade level performance "looks like"				

Action Steps			Evaluation	
Action	**By Whom and When**	**Needed Resources**	**Evidence of Progress**	**Completion Date**
Establish the process to notify parents of the date, time, and location of appeals committee meeting				
Develop an array of interventions to serve students performing at Levels I and II that schools could choose to implement based on the needs of the students				
Design and implement a program for locally-developed and assessed writing samples to evaluate progress in writing by students in grades 5 and 8				
Decide on the format for PEPs, or determine if each school should develop its own format				
Develop brochures/ pamphlets and explain the policy and procedures to parents, students, teachers, and the general public				

Action Steps			Evaluation	
Action	**By Whom and When**	**Needed Resources**	**Evidence of Progress**	**Completion Date**
Conduct awareness sessions for the general public about the policy and procedures				
Disaggregate student data to look at proficiency of students by grade level and class, gender, and/or ethnicity. Data should also be examined for school-wide areas of weakness				
Determine professional development needs of teachers to include focus on the *Standard Course of Study*, appropriate instructional strategies, diagnosis of student needs, and intervention strategies				
Conduct an annual review of policy, procedures, and professional development offerings				
Report data to the State Board of Education, as requested				

Suggested Procedures For Implementing The Student Accountability Standards At The School Level

1. **Develop a list of interventions that should occur between the first and second test administrations.** These interventions may include flexible skill groups across or within grade levels, focus on test-taking strategies, extended school day, Saturday Academy, concentrated homework on a particular skill, and/or in-school/after school tutoring groups.

2. **Develop a process for parents to request an exemption from the second testing and begin focused intervention immediately.** Note: This may simply involve follow-up notification to the countywide strategy. If not appointed by the central office, how will school representatives to the appeals committee be selected?

3. **Develop the appeals process at the school level.** Who will the parent contact, and how will s/he know to contact this person? How will the parent be informed of the date, time, and location of the hearing as well as the results of the appeal?

4. **Determine how and where documentation of appeals will be maintained at the school level.** Should these be placed in the permanent record or in a separate file? Should the file be located in the principal's office or with permanent records? Who is responsible for seeing that all forms are filed/mailed to parents appropriately? It is suggested that these records become a part of the student's permanent record.

5. **Determine what focused interventions will best meet the needs of students who do not meet student accountability standards.** A variety of strategies may be needed to meet the needs of students. These may include extended school year, intersession classes, individual tutoring, Saturday Academy, summer school, etc. However, the intervention should **match the student's needs and be documented in his/her PEP**. The school should also decide who is responsible for monitoring the PEPs to ensure that students receive the appropriate intervention.

6. **Determine any additional professional development needed at the school level in addition to what is provided by the central office.** Because each school is different, professional development needs may vary. In addition to the professional development offered at the district level, schools may have additional needs. It is recommended that the staff development committee make appropriate recommendations to the school improvement team to make the final decision.

7. **Determine how the faculty will be informed about disaggregated test data and other data reported to the State Board.** All teachers and staff need to be aware of how students performed, areas of strength, and areas that need additional attention. Trends in these areas provide valuable information to make informed curriculum

decisions. The school should also closely monitor the progress of students promoted to the next grade without having met the student accountability standards. This is important information that teachers and staff should have before PEPs and school improvement plans are finalized.

Action Plan For Implementing
The Student Accountability Standards At The School Level

School: _____ **Person Responsible:** _____

Action Steps			Evaluation	
Action	**By Whom and When**	**Needed Resources**	**Evidence of Progress**	**Completion Date**
Develop a list of interventions to be used between first and second testing				
Develop a process for parents to request exemption from second testing				
Develop school-based appeals procedures, including process for how and where documentation will be filed				
Determine what focused interventions will best meet the needs of students who do not meet the student accountability standards				

Action Steps			Evaluation	
Action	**By Whom and When**	**Needed Resources**	**Evidence of Progress**	**Completion Date**
Determine format and offer training to faculty and staff in developing PEPs				
Determine and implement school-based professional development that impacts on student achievement				
Determine how disaggregated and reported data will be shared with school faculty; how to use data analysis, and what action will be taken based on the data				

Words Of Advice
From Transylvania County

Student Accountability: A Race Into the Unknown, 1993 to Present

Key Points to Consider

- The policy/state mandates change nothing. Teamwork changes everything.
- The LEA will need input from all players involved.
- Decisions should be reached through consensus.
- Communication is the priority issue: at the system, school, and classroom levels. There shouldn't be any surprises for students, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, or other stakeholders.
- The local board of education must make a long-term commitment to the standards.
- Greater acceptance of the standards will occur over time.
- The superintendent must
  a) support student accountability,
  b) discuss issues frequently with staff,
  c) keep abreast of issues in the schools,
  d) offer assistance where needed, and
  e) include performance in staff evaluations.
- Schools will need to make decisions related to changes that are needed; schedules for remediation; safety nets for students; communication within the school and with the students and parents; and stuff input on how to improve focused interventions and the process for serving students.
- Potential problem areas to be addressed may include
  a) the fact that standards are mandated;
  b) the attitude that "This, too, shall pass";
  c) grade inflation: students making high grades may not reach required proficiency levels;
  d) insufficient instructional leadership;
  e) curriculum and instruction not aligned with the *Standard Course of Study*;
  f) teachers may "teach to the test;"
  g) remediation may begin too late;
  h) poor record keeping, and

i) excuses for lack of achievement and lack of performance.

- There are several things LEAs/schools can expect as the standards are implemented:
  a) During the first year, grade inflation and communication problems may occur.
  b) During the second year, fatigue may set in and decrease focus.
  c) Fatigue may continue into the third year, and educators can become complacent.
  d) Complacency can continue into the fourth year, and remediation efforts may be insufficient.

Words Of Advice
From Watauga County

Points of Emphasis

- Begin with kindergarten, first, and second grades to identify individual students in need of a different tactic and to provide that intervention.
- Acceleration and remediation efforts must be sustained.
- Remember that all students (including those with a learning disability) can and will learn given appropriate instruction, support, and adequate time.
- Don't accept excuses for why students aren't learning.
- Plan strategies to meet what may be perceived as "parent deficiencies."
- Students should not be provided with "more of the same" that wasn't initially successful for them.

Words Of Advice
From Superintendents

M. Douglas James, Lenoir County Schools

Upon the adoption of the local board of education policy on the implementation of the State Board of Education Student Accountability Standards, it is very important to begin and maintain a comprehensive communications program with staff, students, parents, and community, emphasizing the level of proficiency required and why it is so important to all students to achieve at or above grade level. Publicity should be provided on the percentage of students who are currently meeting the standards and improvements needed in each benchmark grade to enable students to meet the new standards. The impact of the policy needs to be communicated to each individual student and parent showing the student's achievement level, how it compares to the state standard, and the growth that must occur if the current achievement level is below state standard.

An instructional management system needs to be implemented, including curriculum alignment, disaggregation of test data, the development of individual education plans for each student, student/teacher/parent contracts, and frequent assessment and reporting with instruments aligned with the *Standard Course of Study*. Continuous involvement of parents is very critical.

The instructional program must include a variety of options that will enable the local school staff, with site-based management, to meet the individual needs of students through small group instruction, computer technology, tutorial programs, after school programs, Saturday academies, summer school, etc. Many students will not only need a different mode of instruction, but will also require additional instructional time to be successful.

Schools must provide the necessary technology to keep the increased teacher workload to a minimum. Appropriate hardware and software is needed to evaluate test data; develop assessment instruments; scan tests and report data for each student, class, and grade; and provide a variety of computerized learning activities.

Extensive staff development in instructional leadership and management, effective use of technology, curriculum review and alignment, test development, teaching strategies, and parental involvement is needed to effectively implement the above intervention strategies. All staff development must be based on the principle that every child can master the competencies required to meet the standards if they are provided appropriate instruction and given adequate time, unless they have severe handicapping conditions that would preclude such.

Fiscal commitment must be made to provide for staffing, materials, technology, after school and summer school programs, testing, staff development, and appropriate marketing.

Celebrate success. Each teacher, each school, and the school system must place heavy emphasis on affirming student academic achievement through a variety of methods and techniques.

Words Of Advice
From Superintendents

Joseph Peel, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools

The danger of the ABCs is to only focus at the school and classroom level. For the first time in the history of education in North Carolina, educators are being held accountable for a continuous, standardized result – the academic growth of every child. To reach this goal the district, not the school or the classroom, must provide the stable vision, must maintain a consistent direction and focus and must build the professional capacity of its employees. District leadership must ensure that the district and each of its schools are focused organizations, not just places where individual contractors show up each day to work. Standardized results are not achievable by groups of individuals who work alone.

Words Of Advice
From Superintendents

Donald L. Martin, Jr., Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

The way to achieve grade-level performance for all students is to identify individual student weaknesses early and then provide the appropriate instructional intervention until grade-level performance is achieved. Sounds simple, doesn't it?

In the spring of 1998 – a year before the State Board of Education adopted new promotion standards – the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education adopted a policy that requires students who are not proficient in reading and math in grades 4 and 7 to receive 80 hours of instruction outside of the classroom during the next 12 months. If the teachers of these students recommended promotion to grades 5 and 8 respectively, then students were promoted. If these students were not proficient after 12 months, they would be retained if they had not completed the 80 hours.

The new State Board policy only changes the outcome: i. e., non-proficient students in grades 5 and 8 will be retained unless a waiver is granted. We will continue requiring our 80 hours of outside-of-school instruction. Each school receives funds to provide a customized program. Some schools have conducted summer school, Saturday school, before and/or after school sessions, or a combination of these programs. We are anxiously awaiting the tabulation of how our 80-hour students performed this year.

A more promising and systemic approach to achieving grade-level performance for all children is to engage families early on in the education of their children. We are beginning our third year of the Victory in Partnership program which encourages parents to access the school. The program highlights weekly communication between parents and teachers and regular parent training sessions on Saturdays.

It is also critical that we reach disadvantaged youth before they come to school. Our Smart Start program is funding a "Jump Start" program to target identified prekindergarten students in readiness skills (we will operate 28, two-week Jump Start programs this summer!). We have also committed to supporting a preschool class in any school that has more than 75% of its students on free and/or reduced lunch.

The bottom line, however, is that educators and parents must constantly assess and monitor the achievement of every child.

Words Of Advice From Principals

Gerald Roberson, E. B. Frink Middle School, Lenoir County Schools

For students to achieve grade-level proficiency, you don't necessarily have to do anything spectacular. In fact, the answer can be as simple as concentrating on the basics and believing in your students. We don't talk about losers at E. B. Frink, we talk about winners. In daily announcement, I'll often say "Winners, may I have your attention?" Attitude is one thing we all have control over.

A positive attitude is a must. If the principal is excited and positive about change, the teachers will be, and this trickles down to the students and parents. Students at Frink are required to achieve a minimum scale score in reading and mathematics in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Students not meeting the benchmark are eligible for summer school and retesting.

There were a number of things we did immediately at Frink when the county's standards were first implemented. One of the first was to make sure that what was being taught in the classroom aligned with the state's *Standard Course of Study* (SCS). We brought in teachers from other schools who had success in areas where we needed to improve. For instance, two teachers from Duplin County where writing scores were high came in to discuss what they were doing. Teachers also had access to staff development opportunities, including workshops in math manipulatives, the seventh grade writing test, SRA (a corrective reading program), and a hands-on mathematics program that teaches strategies to integrate social studies and science into the curriculum. Guidance counselors visited the classrooms to discuss test-taking strategies.

It's important for teachers to align what they are doing in the classroom with the state's SCS. I tell my teachers that they first need to be sure they are teaching the SCS. Then, they can highlight issues they feel are important. I believe our classrooms, given our block schedule, allow for this flexibility. The flexibility has lent itself to a number of the intervention strategies the school employs to reach students not performing at grade level or beginning to show signs of having difficulty.

We break our social studies class into two periods. During the last half of the period, which is approximately 40 minutes, our Level I and II students attend our "Something Really Awesome" program which is what we call the SRA reading remediation program. There they receive one-on-one assistance from our direct studies teachers in areas where they are weak. Direct studies teachers include those who teach music, art, home economics, Spanish, physical education, or technical programs. Involving these teachers who don't usually teach academics gives them ownership into the program.

The entire school uses the last 10 minutes of the third period for reading. And, students performing at Level II or low Level III are required to work daily with either a reading or mathematics teacher in the school's Title I computer lab and to complete individualized reading and mathematics activities.

Redirection of low-wealth dollars has enabled the school to offer twice-weekly tutorial sessions to struggling students. The school facilitates student transportation and local businesses donate snacks. And, for those students who still do not meet board requirements for promotion, summer school and retesting are options.

The Standards have been successful in Lenoir County, partly because the local board was persistent. They stuck by their decision and were consistent in their rulings. That can't be easy when several hundred parents show up at board meetings or call expressing their displeasure. Central office staff also had meetings in each community to explain the standards. Their efforts enabled us to concentrate on the classroom.

There is no reason why every school in the state, no matter how poor they are, can't have high student achievement. All it takes is teachers working hard to be good teachers and students and parents being held accountable.

Words Of Advice
From Principals

Tom Thomas, T. C. Henderson School, Transylvania County Schools

From my perspective and experience, I can make the following recommendations about accountability:

First and foremost, I have always believed that with parents entrusting their children to us for their formal education, we MUST be accountable, administration, teachers, students, and parents. So, a North Carolina accountability policy is long overdue. How do you make sure it's a working document?

- Counties must have a reasonable but strict attendance policy with clear consequences for parents and students who do not adhere to the attendance policy. State laws must be strengthened and used by the schools' administration to make sure that parents are appropriately punished for the neglect they show by the unexcused absences of their children from school. Students' absence from school for 20 days equals one month of lost education. Consequences should follow promptly.

- Student/Parent support systems (safety nets) should be in place in all counties that assure that all students can succeed. An example of this would be having a system set up where all teachers are paid a fair and equitable salary for tutoring an hour after school once or twice a week. This tutoring would have students in need of remediation as its first priority, but it should also be available for all students who would benefit from a small student-teacher ratio whether they are gifted or in need of additional support. Parents would be responsible for transportation after tutoring or possibly the school system could provide transportation. I do feel this should be a parent's responsibility. Size limits of 5 or less should be strictly enforced.

- Homework labs should be set up two or more days a week. Assistants or teachers could supervise the lab. This would provide a supervised place for students to go after school for at least an hour to work on their homework in an environment conducive to success with access to reference materials and technology they may not have access to at their homes. This lab could be much larger than tutoring sessions, 30 or more students. Parents would again be responsible for transportation after the homework lab. Again, I believe all students should have access to this resource/benefit. I also believe that if a student accumulates three days of homework that is unexcused and not completed, then this homework lab should be mandatory.

- The playing field we call public education must be leveled. First, the educational team must be supported and held accountable to develop their skills to the highest levels possible and be paid appropriately for those gains. I have teachers and assistants who work at a professional level far above their pay levels. This has to

change. The state already has a punishment system in place for schools that do not meet standards and a reward system for schools that are exemplary or schools of excellence. Teachers and administrators must have knowledge and the use of the tools (technology, books, CDs, laser disks, video, software, and media center support) to bring down walls that limit quality instruction and support the journey to make all their individual students reach their highest potential. Teachers must be experts in the *Standard Course of Study*, keep student work in portfolios, use testing to make the needed changes in instruction and tutoring, keep parents informed (weekly and more often if necessary), and expect ALL students to strive to their highest academic and personal potential. Administration must have a staff ratio that allows them to be instructional leaders and supervise their instructional staff at a high level. How many schools have a supervisor per 15 or 20 employees, no less an instructional leader to work with those professionals?

- Finally, laws need to be established to hold parents accountable, and yes, punish parents who neglect their children's education. For example, parent supervision and support is questionable when students consistently come to school without their homework and/or fail major subject areas. Parents would rather their children fail than make arrangements for them to take advantage of after school tutoring, homework labs, and in some cases, summer school to help their children succeed. Parent involvement is paramount to the successful education of the children of North Carolina, and parents must be held accountable for the preparation and monitored supervision of their children. If you think this type of law would be considered radical, think about how you would feel if you as a parent were denied the right to be responsible for your children.

I wish you all the best in making accountability work and more importantly, making all parties directly involved accountable for the success of the children of North Carolina. There are no hidden secrets to the educational success of our children, but there are some hard decisions to be made and capital and laws to be found to make them work.

WORDS OF ADVICE
From Principals

MaryAnn Sonntag, Konnoak Elementary School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

Konnoak Elementary School has implemented the Student Accountability Standards as a kindergarten through fifth grade program. The entire curriculum delivery model has been continuously evaluated in light of student performance and needs.

The following will give a perspective on areas addressed (i. e., the last three years) which the administration and faculty believe have contributed to our success:

- review and restructuring teaching methodologies to ensure Standard Course of Study delivery;
- integration of reading and writing in all subject areas, K-5;
- emphasis on higher order thinking skills, K-5;
- test analysis per class and student – especially in reading, math, and writing at least quarterly (STAR tests, testlets);
- analysis and study of released End-of-Grade test questions and utilization of these types of questions on a daily basis;
- use of individualized computer tutorial in reading and math, K-5, aligned with the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and test strategies;
- small group at-risk reading instruction through Title I and Early Success/Soar to Success, tutorials in regular classroom (Houghton Mifflin reading);
- school improvement plan aligned with best practices and available student assessment data;
- evaluation of teachers to discern areas of need and provide appropriate training;
- strong emphasis on K-2 subjects and higher order thinking (WINGS kindergarten program);
- balanced approach to reading (basal, phonics, and whole language);
- multi-age groupings and looping classes to meet student developmental needs;
- intercession remediation programs – year round school;
- use of testlets and test sophistication materials;
- individual student packets sent to parents to review areas of need in reading, writing, and math;
- integration of basic skills in specialist courses (art, music, and PE);
- strong team effort, K-5;
- caring and confident attitude that all children can achieve; and
- deep sense of humor.

WORDS OF ADVICE
From Teachers

Malinda S. Norfleet, Elizabeth City Middle School, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools

Administrators, students, teachers, and parents need to be aware of why the student accountability standards were put into place ... to eliminate social promotion. With the four new "gateways" that each student should master before exiting high school, the dreaded term "social promotion" will be an outdated phrase for the twenty-first century.

Teachers are excited about the idea of communicating the new accountability standards to the students. This is going to be very important for implementation. Teachers and parents should have inservice/implementation sessions at the beginning of the new year (1999-2000) to make sure that everyone understands the criteria for each grade level.

I am sure teachers will continue to focus on early interventions (remediation), a main component of the accountability standards, for those students who will need that extra help. Our school system will continue to use portfolios for students, offer after school tutoring, promote community interventions, offer parental coaching, promote staff development, and continue the School Year Plus for students who do not meet the standards established by the state. Additionally, teachers are aware that retesting of some students and developing PEPs to help students make grade level may be required.

Finally, teachers know that some students will be given an appeals process for promotion. Instructional portfolios, end-of-grade tests, and classroom performances may be reviewed during the appeals process. Under the new gateways, it is the ultimate responsibility of the principal to make the final decision to promote the students. Therefore, it is imperative that administrators, teachers, students, and parents are up-to-date on the new accountability standards.

WORDS OF ADVICE
From Teachers

Cheryl Goetz Bullard, Mineral Springs Elementary School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

In this time of increased accountability, schools and communities must come together to immerse our students in quality educational experiences. In the past, many educators viewed the act of learning as a rote drill and skill routine, with learning being accomplished only through continuous practice from textbook and workbook pages. In reality, schools that are successfully implementing student accountability standards realize that learning best takes place through authentic experiences. Teachers in those schools understand that, in order to be effective readers, students must be able to do more than simply call words on a printed page. These teachers realize that today's readers must be able to analyze, organize, and interpret information from a given text, as well as identify with the roles of various characters and make logical predictions about the plot of a story. Students must be able not only to correctly compute mathematical facts, but often they must be able to read and identify the problem in multi-operation tasks. Students must be able to offer support and reasoning behind their solutions.

Teachers, who understand that students must possess complex thinking skills, provide opportunities for authentic learning experiences such as running and operating a school store or classroom business, following "hot topics" or topics of student interest in the local or national newspapers, writing follow-up with letters to congresspersons or political action groups, and designing a local web page, and posting news of local interest and various weather investigations. Also, these teachers know that, in order to truly raise student accountability standards, they must teach their students to become lifelong learners by teaching children how to build upon and learn from their own individual interests.

The schools where student accountability standards are successfully being implemented do more than just rote skill and drill from workbooks. These schools take on an attitude of teaching the **WHOLE CHILD** how to be accountable for his or her achievement in life.

WORDS OF ADVICE
From Parents

Marian MacGowan, Sheep-Harney Elementary School, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools

Early in our son's third grade year, we began to hear about the ***test***. Terrible things would happen to those who did not pass the ***test***! As the year progressed, so did my son's anxiety about the ***test***. We frequently heard about the consequences he would face if he did not pass. Some of the things he worried about were valid, some were not. The more knowledgeable we became about the process, the more we were able to help him sort out fact from fiction and prepare himself for the big event.

As parents, part of our responsibility is to become knowledgeable about the Student Accountability Standards. Information can come from teachers, counselors, and central office staff. Parents should read materials which are sent home, or which can be found from other sources. Ask questions, and if you don't understand something, ask more questions. As the process of student accountability is being refined, standards are changing, so it is important to keep reading and listening and asking questions.

One thing that was helpful for our child to know was that the ***test*** was only a portion of the student accountability standards. He understands the concept of quality work and we have frequent discussions about doing one's best and putting forth effort. The standards look for growth over a school year, and growth can be demonstrated in many ways.

As the time for the ***test*** approached, we tried to help our son develop a game plan. We discussed test taking strategies that he had learned at school and that we had gathered from other sources. It helped him to hear that Mom and Dad sometimes get worried about important challenges, too. We tried to emphasize that regardless of the outcome of the test, our goal was for him to do the best he could do. We assured him that we would be proudest if he could honestly tell us he had put forth his best effort.

Several years have passed since that first experience with our school system's student accountability standards. Testing has become less feared in our son's eyes, and more of a challenge to be met. We have developed traditions, such as shopping for lucky test taking pencils, and planning our testing day breakfasts. We plan a special event for after testing to celebrate his doing the best he can. (We try to carry out these plans before scores are known so the emphasis in on **effort**, not result.)

The Student Accountability Standards are helping our son become a self-directed learner. He is responsible for the effort he makes and the quality of work he produces. Wonderful things happen to students who take responsibility for their own learning!

WORDS OF ADVICE
From Parents

Daisy Huffman, Walkertown Elementary School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

Schools and parents can encourage student accountability in a number of ways. Walkertown Elementary School has used many ways to help my child assume more responsibility for his learning. First and foremost, the child needs to be involved in his/her assessment throughout the school year. The child must be aware of the school's expectations for him and understand how much improvement he needs to make. This year, parents will receive a list of objectives to be taught each quarter and a meeting will be held to discuss these with parents at the beginning of the grading period. The child or parent may be unaware of progress or lack of progress until the end of the quarter, so, in our school, a weekly folder is sent home with graded work and a progress note. This provides both my child and me input on his weekly progress. Throughout each quarter, teachers meet with students on an individual basis and discuss grades, behavior, improvement, and any skills not yet accomplished and communicate this to parents.

This, in turn, leads to student-led conferences at the end of the grading quarter. With the use of a work portfolio and recorded discussions between child and teacher, the student can discuss his achievements and shortcomings with his/her parents. I am encouraged to understand that, along with my support, my son is responsible for his end-of-grade test scores or any other state test scores. This knowledge plays a big part in student accountability.

Schools can help children take responsibility for these test scores by providing similar models of the test for practice. Teachers can provide test strategies to help reduce test anxiety and provide a tool for test taking. Teachers have class discussions on the importance of these tests and possible consequences of low test scores. Teachers provide tutoring from 7:30 to 8:30 each morning for students who need help. It is my understanding that at Walkertown Elementary, students are provided with all of these things across the school. With my son, it began in first grade.

Behind every child are the parents. I believe parents can help in many ways. On a daily basis, parents should find time to talk about good things that happened that day and bad things that happened that day. As parents, we want to hear about school topics. But I find that my child will talk about lunch, recess, and friends. I let him talk about that. Then, later in the conversation, I ask questions about other things. Every week, a parent should look over the checked work with the child. I suggest that parents just talk about it. Many times we want to criticize immediately. It is better for the parent to share in the discussion and avoid criticism. Let the child lead the discussion. Parents can visit the school more often. This lets the child know you care and he will more likely take more responsibility for his actions/work. If, at any time, the parent or child is confused about a

skill, grade, or incident, the parent can call the teacher or write a note. Fortunately, at Walkertown, our teachers have voice mail. Teachers leave weekly messages with assignments and even words of praise and encouragement so students and parents can call daily and leave messages for the teacher, too. This is wonderful and helps us keep up with information.

Lastly, the school should be clear in its expectations, should show respect for students and their concerns, and should provide plans to help the student assume responsibility for his successes and failures.

Recommended Topics for Professional Development
Related to the Student Accountability Standards

(Listed in priority order)

1. Understanding the *Standard Course of Study* and use of appropriate research-based instructional strategies/support materials (includes curriculum alignment)
2. Differentiating instruction (balanced reading; brain-based instruction; student engagement strategies; varying time, content, instructional management, and instructional methodologies; etc.)
3. Demonstrating and maintaining high expectations for all students
4. Facilitating success in a diverse classroom
5. Critical and creative thinking
6. Conducting a needs assessment, making data-driven decisions, and planning instruction based on needs/data
7. Organizing the school day for maximum actual time on task
8. Classroom management
9. Effective lesson planning
10. Developing and using effective personalized education plans
11. Evaluating teachers and providing timely and appropriate feedback

Key Points for Professional Development
Related to the Student Accountability Standards

1. First discussions must focus on whether or not teachers and administrators really believe that all children can learn.

2. Intra-grade level and cross-grade level professional development should focus on effective, research-based strategies for teaching content outlined in the *Standard Course of Study*.

3. Teachers should be given a needs assessment for professional development in order to determine LEA goals. The survey includes needs for school improvement, SACS, Title I, safe schools, etc.

4. School goals must fit into the LEA goals and are a part of the review/approval process for professional development activities. This helps with consistency and focus systemwide.

5. Acceleration/growth of gifted students is always a part of planning and professional development

6. The same goals and topics for professional development should be in place for a number of years. Continuing professional development allows for indepth training in the critical areas. The LEA should train "experts" in the critical need areas so that these experts can then work with other teachers in the school/LEA. This will build the capacity of the schools and LEAs to meet their own professional development needs without having to "hire" others from outside the LEA.

7. Professional development activities must include follow-up sessions and coaching in the classroom as teachers begin implementing new practices.

8. Teachers could expand and articulate content of the *Standard Course of Study*, develop pacing guides, lesson plans, and lists of resources to share with other teachers in the school/LEA.

9. Nothing should be done in isolation. Several initiatives must be in place at the same time.

10. Principals and assistant principals should be trained in the same areas as teachers to identify and support appropriate strategies observed in the classroom.

11. Principals in the LEA should have periodic curriculum meetings (by grade spans). Topics of discussion include remediation strategies in place, any problems with implementing the Standard Course of Study, and what's working well to help students in the schools. Test results are reviewed by the superintendent with the principal and central office representative.

Writing Gateways
Frequently Asked Questions

Proficiency in writing is part of the North Carolina Student Accountability Standards. The purpose of this information is to respond to questions and concerns about the Gateways for Writing in Grades 5 and 8. Gateways are points at which students must demonstrate proficiency in writing according to state standards in order to be promoted to the next grade level. In addition to state standards, students are responsible for meeting local promotion requirements.

The new standards for Grade 5 will go into effect during the 2000-2001 school year (for students who take the Grade 4 writing assessment in 1999-2000). The new standards for Grade 8 will take effect the following year, 2001-2002 (for students who will take the Grade 7 writing assessment in 2000-2001).

Q: What role do the state-wide writing assessments play in the Gateways?

A: Students demonstrate proficiency in writing by scoring a 2.5 or higher on a 4-point focused holistic scale for the Grades 4 and 7 writing assessments. For more information about the writing assessments and the scoring criteria, please review the writing information on the Department of Public Instruction Infoweb at http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/accountability/testing.

Q: Do the writing gateways apply to students with disabilities/students with limited English proficiency?

A: The Student Accountability Standards do apply to exceptional children and to students with limited English proficiency. Students with disabilities may be exempted from the standards by the Individual Education Program Team, if it is determined that the students do not have the ability to participate in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. For students in grades 3 through 8 with limited English proficiency who are exempt from statewide testing due to the language barrier, a portfolio may be used to document students' progress and English language proficiency.

Q: What happens if a student does not achieve a 2.5 on the writing assessment?

A: State Board of Education policy requires that the student be given focused intervention and assistance to enhance writing skills. Principals, teachers, and parents should work together to provide opportunities and to support the student's developing skills. To be promoted, a student must demonstrate "adequate progress" in writing by the end of 5th and 8th grades.

Q: What if the student does well all year long but performs poorly on the state writing assessment?

A: Local agency plans may have provisions for determining whether a student's poor performance on the test was the result of extenuating circumstances. Again, State Board of Education policy does require that the student be given focused intervention and assistance to enhance writing skills. A student who performs well on out-of-class assignments may still need some additional assistance in mastering on-demand, timed writing tasks. Additionally, students must be able to write in different contexts. For example, a student who writes strong creative pieces may need help with developing organized support for an expository piece.

Q: Will the student be required to retake the state writing assessment?

A: The state will not administer a second assessment in writing. Local education agencies are responsible for developing a plan for schools to determine if a student has made "adequate progress" to be promoted to the next grade. Local plans may include provisions for on-demand as well as process writing as part of a student's portfolio to demonstrate overall progress in writing.

Q: Since the state assessment is on-demand writing, should students focus entirely on this kind of writing?

A: On-demand writing is one component of strong writing program, which should also include a variety of approaches and assignments to enhance a student's writing skills. While students may need additional assistance in planning and time management specifically related to on-demand writing, they also should be practicing these skills in assignments that focus on process writing and are not time limited. Additionally, students who have difficulty with on-demand writing may need general tips for test taking.

Q: Does the student need to demonstrate adequate progress in the specific mode of writing assessed by the state or in writing overall?

A: State Board of Education policy does not specify a particular mode of writing on which a student's progress is to be judged. Common to all modes and consistent through all levels of writing assessment in North Carolina, the four criteria of Main Idea, Supporting Detail, Organization, and Coherence are the foundations of effective writing. No student should focus solely on one mode or one type of writing, but rather the development of the writing skills reflected in the scoring criteria. This strategy allows for students who have not scored at the proficient level on the Grades 4 or 7 writing assessments to receive instruction in the Grade 5 or 8 curriculum while improving the same skills taught and assessed at the previous grade. However, the mode and type of writing used to determine a student's adequate progress remains a local decision.

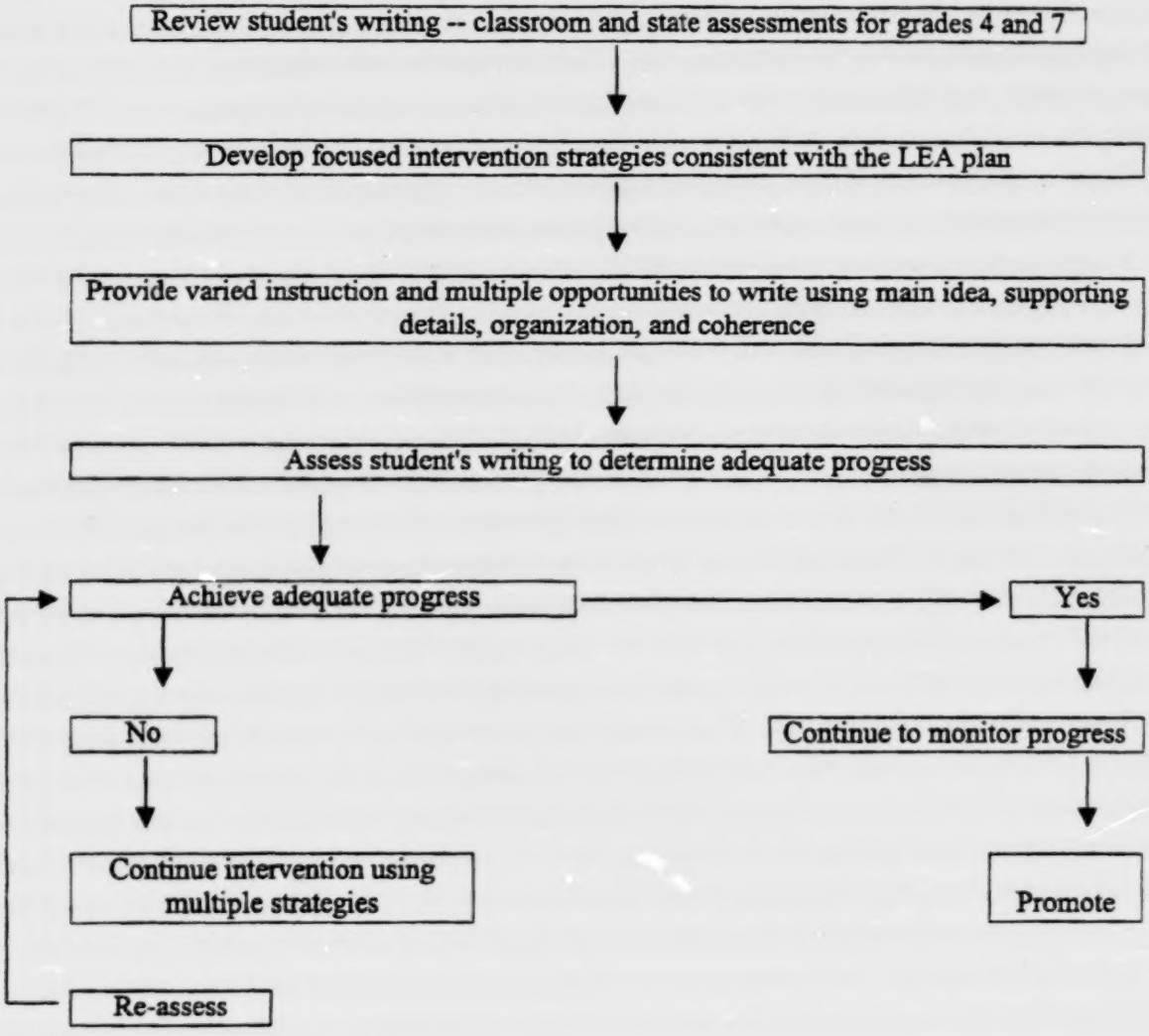
Q: Must the student be placed in a separate "remediation" class?

A: No. Students who did not demonstrate proficiency on the state writing assessment may receive intervention and assistance within a regular classroom, through a variety of instructional strategies.

Q: What might the intervention strategies look like?

A: Based on local agency policies, individual schools and teachers will determine the plan of instruction that best meets students' needs. Along with parental involvement, strategies may include but are not limited to alternative learning models, smaller classes, tutorial sessions, and/or modified instructional programs.

Intervention Cycle


Review student's writing -- classroom and state assessments for grades 4 and 7
Develop focused intervention strategies consistent with the LEA plan
Provide varied instruction and multiple opportunities to write using main idea, supporting details, organization, and coherence
Assess student's writing to determine adequate progress
Achieve adequate progress
Yes
No
Continue to monitor progress
Continue intervention using multiple strategies
Promote
Re-assess

***Documenting progress is essential.**

Sample Forms

Elementary and Middle School Personalized Education Plan

_____ School

Part I: Descriptive Information

Student: _____ Grade: _____ School Year: _____

Teacher: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Birthdate: _____ Interests: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____ Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

Attendance Record: _____ Behavior Patterns: _____ Social Skills: _____

Check all appropriate: _____ Exceptional Child _____ ESL _____ Prior Retainee

Part II: Diagnostic Information

Check all appropriate statements, if applicable:

_____ Level I in Reading

_____ Level I in Mathematics

_____ Level II in Reading

_____ Level II in Mathematics

_____ Below 2.5 in Writing

Reading Assessment: Kindergarten: _____ Grade 1: _____ Grade 2: _____

Math Assessment: Kindergarten: _____ Grade 1: _____ Grade 2: _____

Results of other assessments: _____

_____

_____

Academic Strengths

Academic Weaknesses

Part III: Intervention Plan

Weaknesses to be Addressed	Strategies	Timeline	Resources Needed	Method of Assessment

Part IV: Monitoring/Adjustments

Progress Checks: Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Adjustments Made and Date(s):

Signatures:

Student: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

High School Personalized Education Plan

_____ School

Part I: Descriptive Information

Student: _____ Grade: _____ School Year: _____ Teacher: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Birthdate: _____ Interests: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____ Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

Attendance Record: _____ Behavior Patterns: _____ Social Skills: _____

Check all appropriate: _____ Exceptional Child _____ ESL _____ Prior Retentions

Part II: Diagnostic Information

Check all appropriate statements, if applicable:

_____ Level I in Reading

_____ Level I in Mathematics

_____ Level II in Reading

_____ Level II in Mathematics

_____ Below 2.5 in Writing

End-of-Course Results

_____ English I _____ Algebra I _____ ELPS _____ Biology

_____ English II _____ Algebra II _____ US History _____ Phy Science

_____ English III _____ Geometry _____ Chemistry

_____ English IV _____ Physics

Academic Strengths

Academic Weaknesses

Part III: Intervention Plan

Weaknesses to be Addressed	Strategies	Timeline	Resources Needed	Method of Assessment

Part IV: Monitoring/Adjustments

Progress Checks: Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Adjustments Made and Date(s):

Signatures:

Student: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Master Achieve Perform*

_____ **Schools**

Student: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____

Birthdate: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Parents: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Days Present/Enrolled This Year: _____

ESL/Migrant Identified: _____ Yes _____ No

This student is retained because of _____ local standards _____ State standards

Student attended summer school in 19_____ _____ Never attended

Date Plan Developed: _____ **Date Plan Completed:** _____

Strengths	Weaknesses

Instructional Focus	Resources	Strategies	Beginning/Ending Dates

First Nine Weeks: _____ **Teachers' Signatures**

_____ **Parent's Signature**

_____ **Date**

Instructional Focus	Resources	Strategies	Beginning/Ending Dates

Second Nine Weeks: _____ **Teachers' Signatures**

_____ **Parent's Signature**

_____ **Date**

Instructional Focus	Resources	Strategies	Beginning/Ending Dates

Third Nine Weeks: _____ **Teachers' Signatures**

_____ **Parent's Signature**

_____ **Date**

Instructional Focus	Resources	Strategies	Beginning/Ending Dates

Parents will be notified by telephone as to the status of the student.

Comments: (Teacher and/or Parent)

Assistance Team Review:

Signature	Position	Date
Signature	Position	Date
Signature	Position	Date
Signature	Position	Date

*Completed for each student who is retained. Thanks to Johnston County Schools for providing the model for this form.

Intervention Plan*

_____ **Schools**

Student: _____ School: _____

Grade: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

1997-98: EOG Reading Score: _____ (Scale Score) _____ (Level)

EOG Math Score: _____ (Scale Score) _____ (Level)

1998-99: EOG Reading Score: _____ (Scale Score) _____ (Level)

EOG Math Score: _____ (Scale Score) _____ (Level)

Years Retained: _____ None _____ Once/Grade _____ Twice/Grades

Areas of Remediation: _____ Reading _____ Mathematics

Interventions	Comments
Modified Instruction	
_____ visual examples	
_____ modify length of assignment	
_____ divide task into parts	
_____ concrete instruction (hands-on)	
_____ rubrics	
_____ graphic organizers	
_____ copies of notes	
_____ oral tests	

Interventions	Comments
_____ peer tutoring	
_____ volunteer tutoring	
_____ after-school remediation	
_____ summer school	
_____ during-the-day remediation	
_____ before-school remediation	
_____ Title I resources	
_____ ESL class	
Supplemental _____Materials/Programs _____ NC Reading/Math testlets _____ Reading/Math Coach _____ Reading/Math Blast Off/Buckle Down, etc. _____ Accelerated Reader _____	

Parent Signature Position Date

Teacher's Signature Position Date

Team Signature Positions Date

Sample Student/Parent/Teacher Contract*

The State Board of Education and the _____ Board of Education have adopted policies requiring students to meet state and local standards for promotion in grades 3, 5, and 8, and for graduation from high school. The Boards believe that learning can take place best when there is shared effort, interest, and motivation by students, parents, and staff.

We are committed to _____ 's success in school and promise to work together to promote his/her achievement.

As a student in _____ Schools, I pledge to...

- respect myself and the rights of others;
- attend school regularly;
- follow the Code of Student Conduct;
- come to school dressed appropriately, with necessary materials, and prepared to work;
- ask my teacher when I don't understand; and
- complete all of my assignments on time.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

As the parent of _____, I pledge to ...

- provide ample, quiet study time at home and encourage good study habits;
- make sure my child is well-rested and at school on time;
- support the school staff in their efforts to promote appropriate behavior;
- encourage my child to read more;
- communicate regularly with my child's teacher;
- monitor my child's homework;
- read, sign, and return my child's progress reports; and
- attend parent/teacher conferences as requested.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

As a classroom teacher in _____ Schools, I pledge to ...

- explain my expectations, instructional goals, and grading system to the student and parent;
- teach the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*;
- provide a climate in my classroom that is conductive to learning;
- communicate with parents through conferences, progress reports, and by telephone;
- employ various teaching methods which work best for the student;
- provide enrichment and remediation opportunities for the student as needed; and
- respect the cultural differences of my students.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

The principal of your child's school is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment that is conductive to learning. As the instructional leader of the school, s/he will support the teachers in their efforts to teach all students. Opportunities for the establishment and attainment of high expectations will be made available to all students.

Parent involvement is essential as we work to give your child the best educational experiences possible.

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for the model for this agreement.**

Student/Parent/District Sample Contract*

We know that learning can take place only when there is a combination of effort, interest, and motivation. As we are all committed to _____ 's progress in school, we are going to do our best to promote his/her achievement. This compact is an agreement to work in partnership. We believe this compact will be fulfilled by our team effort. Together, we will ensure the successful attainment of our mutual goal.

As a student, I will

- read (or be read to) at least 15 minutes per day,
- be prepared for school each day (homework complete),
- discuss what I am learning in school with my parent(s)/guardian(s),
- follow the Student Code of Conduct (school rules),
- ask my teacher questions when I don't understand something,
- go to my public or school library at least once each week, and
- limit the time I spend watching TV.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

As a parent/guardian/advocate, I will

- schedule daily study times in a quiet, well-lit location;
- talk to my child about his/her school activities every day;
- reinforce the Student Code of Conduct (school rules);
- find out how my child is progressing by attending conferences, reviewing and discussing school work, and calling the school;
- encourage my child to read by reading to him/her and by reading myself;
- limit TV viewing time and select worthwhile programs;
- have my child at school and on time each day;
- follow through with and support all educational recommendations of the school for school programs such as summer school, Saturday academies, and extended day programs;
- ensure a minimum of eight hours of sleep nightly; and
- ensure that my child has breakfast everyday (at home or school).

Parent/Guardian/Advocate's Signature: _____ Date: _____

As a school, the teachers and administrators pledge to

- provide motivating and interesting learning experiences in their classrooms;
- explain expectations, instructional goals, and grading systems to parents;
- explain the Student Code of Conduct to the students and his/her parents/guardians/advocates;
- continue to improve and add to our knowledge and skills in order to remain competent and well-trained;
- communicate and cooperate with each parent/guardian/advocate to ensure the best education possible;
- implement techniques and materials that work best for each child; and
- participate in ongoing professional development.

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

As a district, _____ will employ teachers and administrators who

- deliver a high quality, well-articulated curriculum;
- provide a learning environment that is nurturing, mutually respectful, and includes appropriate materials/resources;
- keep you (parent/guardian/advocate/learner) informed of academic achievement; and
- support the partnership between parents, students, staff, and communities.

Superintendent's Signature: _____ Date:_____

***Thanks to Durham Public Schools for sharing the model for this compact.**

Sample Contract
Student Achievement Goal*

The _____School's goal is to see _____
(Name of Student)

_____ performing in mathematics and reading at or above grade level (as measured by the North Carolina End-of-Grade tests) at the end of third grade. To accomplish this, it is critical that

1. the student attend the _____ Schools for three or more consecutive years,

2. parents attend all parent/teacher conferences and follow through with the educational recommendations, and

3. the student attends school at least 90 percent of each school year.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

***Thanks to Durham Public Schools for providing the model for this form.**

Waiver Documentation Form*
Grades 3-8

Student Name: _____ School: _____

Grade Level: _____ Principal: _____ Teacher: _____

End-of-Year Testing **Retesting**

End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level: _____ End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level: _____

Reading Developmental Scale Score: _____ Reading Development Scale Score: _____

Reading Range: _____ Reading Range: _____

Performance Criteria

1. Final averages: _____ Reading _____ Mathematics
2. NC Writing Assessment Score _____ (Grades 4-8) _____ Grade 3 Pretest Score
3. Other test scores: _____
4. Reading level: _____ as determined by _____
   (Examples: Accelerated Reader, SRA, Lexile, teacher assessment, etc.)
5. Mathematics level: _____ as determined by _____
   (Examples: SRA Math, Sharpen Up/Buckle Down, teacher assessment, etc.)
6. Class participation: (Written teacher summary of student performance in the classroom which should include cooperation learning participation, projects, remediation activities, extra effort activities, homework, and growth made during the school year.)
7. Academically Intellectually Gifted: ____ Yes ____ No _____ Area

Items to be Included in Waiver Student Portfolio

Reading

- Writing samples representing two of the following modes: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, clarification, persuasive, point-of-view
- Responses from two teacher-made tests depicting problem-solving strategies, etc.
- Responses from two commercially-made tests

Mathematics

- Two writing samples depicting problem-solving strategies
- Responses from two teacher-made tests depicting different mathematics strands
- Responses from two commercially-made tests

Include other information which would document student performance and support granting of the waiver.

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for providing the model for this form.**

Waiver Committee Guide for Waiver Hearings
Points for Consideration in Grades 3-5*

1. **End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level II: (Level II score indicates that a student demonstrates inconsistent mastery of concepts, knowledge, and skills.)**

   Development scale scores: _____ Grade 3 _____ Grade 4 _____ Grade 5

2. **End-of-Grade Mathematics Achievement Level II:** (Level II score indicates that a student demonstrates inconsistent mastery of concepts, knowledge, and skills.)

   Developmental scale scores: _____ Grade 3 _____ Grade 4 _____ Grade 5

3. **Reading Level:**

   Lexile Range
   _____ Third grade (500-600; 75% comprehension)
   _____ Fourth grade (700-800; 75% comprehension)
   _____ Fifth grade (800-900; 75% comprehension)

   Accelerated Reader
   _____ Third grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fourth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fifth grade (75-80% mastery)

   SRA Corrective reading/remedial material

   Other: _____
   _____ Third grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fourth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fifth grade (75-80% mastery)

4. **Mathematics Level:**

   SRA SRA materials are considered remedial

   Math Coaching series
   _____ Third grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fourth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fifth grade (75-80% mastery)

   Other: _____
   _____ Third grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fourth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Fifth grade (75-80% mastery)

5. **Class Participation/Extra Effort:**

   - In cooperative learning activities, did the student perform roles/complete duties assigned 75-80% of the time?
   - Did the student complete projects on time with a 75-80% accuracy rate?
   - Did the student participate in all remediation activities suggested or assigned to him/her?
   - Did the student request extra work/tutoring?
   - Did the student complete all homework assignments with a 75-80% accuracy rate?
   - Did the student come to class prepared 95% of the time?

6. **Academically Intellectually Gifted Classified:**

   _____ Language Arts _____ Mathematics _____ Other _____ None

7. **Writing Samples:**

   - Did the student organize all writing with a beginning, middle, and ending?
   - Does the student write with a 75-80% accuracy rate in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and usage?
   - Does the student write coherently?

   _____ NC Annual Writing Assessment score from grade four

8. **Mathematics Writing Samples:**

   - Does the student write coherently and logically when writing responses to mathematical problems and produce correct responses with a 75-80% accuracy rate?

9. **Teacher-Developed Tests:**

   - Does the student complete teacher-made tests with a 75-80% accuracy rate most of the time?

10. **Commercially-Developed Tests:**

    - Does the student complete commercially-developed tests with a 75-80% accuracy rate most of the time?

11. **Final grade averages:**

    _____ Grade three _____ Grade four _____ Grade five

12. **Verbal Conclusions of the Principal and Teacher Relating to <u>On, Above, and Below Grade Level:</u>**

13. **Clarifying Questions:**

    - Was the student identified this school year as "at risk?"
    - Was remediation available to the student this school year? Did the student participate in remediation activities?
    - Has the student's performance been reviewed by a student services management team/teancher assistance team at the school level?
    - Were the parents notified that the child was having difficulty?

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for providing the model for this form.**

Waiver Committee Guide for Waiver Hearings
Points for Consideration in Grades 6-8*

1. **End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level II: (Level II score indicates that a student demonstrates** inconsistent mastery of concepts, knowledge, and skills.)

   Development scale scores: _____ Grade 6 _____ Grade 7 _____ Grade 8

   End-of-Grade Mathematics Achievement Level II: (Level II score indicates that a student demonstrates inconsistent mastery of concepts, knowledge, and skills.)

   Developmental scale scores: _____ Grade 6 _____ Grade 7 _____ Grade 8

2. **Reading Level:**

   Lexile Range
   _____ Sixth grade (900-1000; 75% comprehension)
   _____ Seventh grade (940-1040; 75% comprehension)
   _____ Eighth grade (1000-1100; 75% comprehension)

   Accelerated Reader
   _____ Sixth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Seventh grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Eighth grade (75-80% mastery)

   SRA — Corrective reading is remedial material

   Other: _____
   _____ Sixth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Seventh grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Eighth grade (75-80% mastery)

3. **Mathematics Level:**

   SRA — SRA materials are considered remedial

   Math Coaching series
   _____ Sixth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Seventh grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Eighth grade (75-80% mastery)

   Other: _____
   _____ Sixth grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Seventh grade (75-80% mastery)
   _____ Eighth grade (75-80% mastery)

4. **Class Participation/Extra Effort:**

   - In cooperative learning activities, did the student perform roles/complete duties assigned 75-80% of the time?
   - Did the student complete projects on time with a 75-80% accuracy rate?
   - Did the student participate in all remediation activities suggested or assigned to him/her?
   - Did the student request extra work/tutoring?
   - Did the student complete all homework assignments with a 75-80% accuracy rate?
   - Did the student come to class prepared 95% of the time?

5. **Academically Intellectually Gifted Classified:**

   _____ Language Arts _____ Mathematics _____ Other _____ None

6. **Writing Samples:**

   - Did the student organize all writing with a beginning, middle, and end?
   - Does the student write with a 75-80% accuracy rate in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and usage?
   - Does the student write coherently?

   _____ NC Annual Writing Assessment score from grade four and/or seven

7. **Mathematics Writing Samples:**

   - Does the student write coherently and logically when writing responses to mathematical problems and produce correct responses with a 75-80% accuracy rate?

8. **Teacher-Developed Tests:**

   - Does the student complete teacher-made tests with a 75-80% accuracy rate most of the time?

9. **Commercially-Developed Tests:**

   - Does the student complete commercially-developed tests with a 75-80% accuracy rate most of the time?

10. **Final grade averages:**

    _____ Grade six _____ Grade seven _____ Grade eight

11. **Verbal Conclusions of the Principal and Teacher Relating to <u>On, Above, and Below Grade Level:</u>**

12. **Clarifying Questions:**

    - Was the student identified this school year as "at risk?"
    - Was remediation available to the student this school year? Did the student participate in remediation activities?
    - Has the student's performance been reviewed by a student services management team/teancher assistance team at the school level?
    - Were the parents notified that the child was having difficulty?

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for providing the model for this form.**

Waiver Documentation Form
For Exceptional Children in Grades 3-8

Student Name: _____

Grade Level: _____ Principal: _____

Teacher(s): _____

Exceptionality: _____ Level of Service: _____

End-of-Year Testing

End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

End-of-Grade Mathematics Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

Retesting

End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

End-of-Grade Mathematics Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

Previous Retentions: _____

Previous Waiver: _____

Reading Level: _____ As determined by: _____

Mathematics Level: _____ As determined by: _____

Items to include:

- Written statements from the exceptional children's and regular education teachers that address student's current progress
- Report card
- Work samples from subject area to be waived
- Student's current IEP
- Student's exceptional children's placement folder
- Recommendations on waiver from the IEP committee

The IEP Committee must submit this form and required documentation to the Exceptional Children's Waiver Committee by _____ (time) on _____. The principal, exceptional children's teacher, and/or student services representative must be present at the Waiver Committee meeting to present the child's case.

***Thanks to Johnston County for providing the model for this form.**

Test Standard Waiver Documentation Form
For Students of Limited English Proficiency
Grades 3, 5, or 8

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____ Principal: _____

Teachers: _____

Date of Initial Enrollment in LEA: _____

English Language Proficiency Rating:

_____ Listening _____ Speaking _____ Reading _____ Writing

Assessment instruments and methods used to determine English language proficiency:

Was student exempt from End-of-Grade Testing? _____ Yes _____ No

If no, provide the following information:

End-of-Year Testing

End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

End-of-Grade Mathematics Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

Retesting

End-of-Grade Reading Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

End-of-Grade Mathematics Achievement Level: _____
Development Scale Score: _____
Range for this level: _____

Supporting Documentation:

- Written statements from the ESL teacher and classroom teachers that address the progress the student has made during the academic year
- Work samples demonstrating progress in all academic areas
- Any additional measures demonstrating student achievement

Subject: _____

End-of-Course Test Score: _____

Waiver Documentation Form for EOC Tests*
(English I, US History, Algebra I, ELPS, and Biology I)

Student Name: _____ School: _____

Grade Level: _____ Principal: _____ Teacher: _____

Items to be Included in Waiver Portfolio:

- Cumulative transcript of grades;
- Test card data for historical assessment trends;
- Class participation (teacher summary of student performance in the classroom which should include cooperative learning participation, projects, remediation activities, extra effort activities, homework, other classwork preparation, etc.);
- Writing samples (samples of work representing several of the following modes: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, clarification, persuasive, point-of-view, definition, evaluative, etc.);
- Responses from two teacher-made tests depicting problem-solving strategies, critical thinking, application, etc.);
- List of books read and/or independent work; and
- Other work products such as graphic organizers, research papers, lab reports, and other samples of technical writing.
- Other information which documents student performance and supports waiving the test standard.

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for providing the model for this form.**

NCR Colored Paper
White copy: Student's permanent record
Pink copy: Parent copy
Yellow copy: Waiver committee

LEA Name
Test Standard Waiver Result Form

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____

Principal: _____

Teacher: _____

Subject Area of Waiver Request: _____

End-of-Grade Achievement Level: _____ Scale Score: _____

Test Standard Waiver: _____ Approved _____ Denied

Reason(s) for Approval: _____

_____

Reason(s) for Denial: _____

_____

Summer School Recommended/Required: _____ Yes _____ No

Signature/Position of Committee Members and Date Signed:

Name	Position	Date Signed
Name	Position	Date Signed
Name	Position	Date Signed
Name	Position	Date Signed

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for providing the model for this form.**

Documentation Form for Level I and II Students
NOT Attending Summer School, But Receiving Other Assistance
(to be completed at the school level)

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____ Principal: _____

1999 Reading Achievement Level: _____

Developmental scale score: _____
Final grade average: _____

1999 Mathematics Achievement Level: _____

Development scale score: _____
Final grade average: _____

To be completed by the person(s) delivering instruction other than summer school:

At the completion of the plan, attach samples of student work and evidence of objectives completed.

Person responsible for delivering alternative instruction: _____
Hours of instruction: _____

Completion Date: _____ End-of-Grade Testing Dates: Reading _____
Math _____

_____ _____
Parent's Signature/Date Signed Principal's Signature/Date Signed

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for the model for this form.**

Parent Contact Documentation Form
Student Accountability for Academic Achievement

School: _____ Student: _____

Grade Level: _____ Teacher: _____ Principal: _____

Parent Contact 1 [For students who do not meet the test standard on the May test(s)]

EOG Reading Score/Level: _____ EOG Math Score/Level _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Is the student exempt from the policy ? _____ No _____ Yes/Reason(s)

Retest Date(s): _____ Reading _____ Mathematics

Teacher comments:

_____ _____
Reading Teacher's Signature/Date Mathematics Teacher's Signature/Date

Parent Contact 1 [For students who do not meet the test standard on the retest(s)]

EOG reading score/level: _____ EOG math score/level _____

Summer school dates: _____ Site: _____

Modifications attached: _____ Student is (circle) EC LEP 504 _____ None

Medications (type, dosage, frequency): _____

Wavier Requested: _____ No _____ Yes (documentation and portfolio completed)

Wavier Status: _____ Approved _____ Not Approved _____ Reason(s)

Achievement Level (circle): I II

Summer School: _____ Will not attend _____ Will attend (attach bus information)

Teacher Comments

_____ _____
Reading Teacher's Signature/Date Mathematics Teacher's Signature/Date

Parent Contact 3: After summer school retest(s); Parents receive scores by mail

EOG Reading Score/Level: _____ EOG Mathematics Score/Level: _____

Summer school teachers' comments

Home School Principal's Decision: _____ Promoted _____ Retained

Communication with parent(s): _____ Date _____ Letter _____ Phone
(concerning promotion/retention)

Description of Testing Modification

Exceptionality or Level of English proficiency: _____

Academic Area(s) Served (Circle all that apply.): ESL Reading Mathematics Written Language

Amount of Time (Circle one.): Regular Resource Self-Contained

Approved Test Modifications

Regular Classroom Modifications Needed:

Other Information Which May Be Helpful When Working with This Student

Current Diagnostic Information (if available):

***Thanks to Johnston County Schools for the model for this form.**

Fifth Grade Editing Checklist*

Use the following checklist to assess the sentence structure, mechanics, and usage for the piece of writing.

	Author	Peer	Teacher
Sentence Structure			
Writes complete sentences (no run-ons or fragments)	_____	_____	_____
Punctuation			
Uses sentence ending marks correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses commas correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses apostrophes correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses quotation marks correctly	_____	_____	_____
Capitalization			
Capitalizes the first word in a sentence	_____	_____	_____
Capitalizes proper nouns	_____	_____	_____
Capitalizes titles	_____	_____	_____
Spelling			
Spells high frequency words correctly	_____	_____	_____
Grammar/Usage			
Uses correct subject-verb agreement	_____	_____	_____
Uses the correct forms of adjectives (small, smaller)	_____	_____	_____
Uses the correct forms of adverbs (faster, fastest)	_____	_____	_____
Uses the correct pronoun case (I, me, him, he)	_____	_____	_____

+ correct almost of the time - correct most of the time x incorrect most of the time

***Thanks to Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools for providing this information.**

Eighth Grade Editing Checklist

Use the following checklist to assess the sentence structure, mechanics, and usage for the piece of writing.

	Author	Peer	Teacher
Sentence Structure			
Writes complete sentences (no run-ons or fragments)	_____	_____	_____
Punctuation			
Uses sentence ending marks correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses commas correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses apostrophes correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses quotation marks correctly	_____	_____	_____
Capitalization			
Capitalizes the first word in a sentence	_____	_____	_____
Capitalizes proper nouns	_____	_____	_____
Capitalizes titles	_____	_____	_____
Spelling			
Spells all words correctly (especially homonyms)	_____	_____	_____
Grammar/Usage			
Uses correct subject-verb agreement	_____	_____	_____
Uses correct pronoun antecedent (noun that comes before it) agreement	_____	_____	_____
Uses the correct form of adjectives	_____	_____	_____
Uses the correct forms of adverbs	_____	_____	_____
Uses negatives correctly	_____	_____	_____
Uses the correct pronoun case	_____	_____	_____

+ correct almost of the time - correct most of the time x incorrect most of the time

***Thanks to Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools for providing this information.**

Eighth Grade Writing
Essential Skills Checklist

Name: _____ School Year: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____

Complete each block for skills mastered 80% of the time	**Add the number of successful marks (each M = 1 point)**	
M: Mastery – 80% of the time	Level I:	0-3 points
NY: Not Yet	Level II	4-8 points
Leave blank if not assessed	Level III	9-16 points
	Total Points	Level

Characteristics of the Writer	**Composing Products**
Appreciates writing as a major source before learning through note taking, brainstorming, listing, or writing in journals or learning logs	Writes arguments that have a coherent, logical, and organized structure
Works collaboratively on a written product that expresses a response to a selection or experience	Writes arguments that provide sufficient, related, elaborated reasons to persuade an audience to adopt a position
Writes with ease in both short passages and extended writing	Writes practical texts such as letters of request and complaint, application forms, or written directions
Composing Pieces	Offers critical opinions or analysis of reading and expresses an alternate point of view of author by writing in learning log
Understands and uses stages in the writing process independently	
Writes on a variety of topics and in more than one genre and mode	
Assesses own performance relative to audience and purpose	
Manages identified resources needed to complete writing tasks	
Revises vocabulary, organizations, and tone as appropriate for audience and purpose	
Chooses organization and layout appropriate for audience	
Uses literary devices and design elements as appropriate to describe, support an opinion, or persuade an audience	
Selects vocabulary as appropriate to reduce ambiguities and to indicate shades of meaning	
Uses grammatical terms necessary for conferencing when revising and editing	
Edits work for errors in sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling	

***Thanks to Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools for providing this information.**

Advocating for Student
Cover Sheet for Reading Work Samples
Third Grade Promotion Portfolio*

Student: _____ Teacher: _____

Type of Sample Attached

_____ Recent reading genre assessment testlet
Must reflect independent work and include title and date at top of student paper (2 samples to reflect different genres)

_____ One other sample of teacher's choice

Teacher Rating of Attached Samples

Check this student's typical level of performance by the end of the school year/nine weeks in the three areas of reading listed below.

1. Self-selected and/or assigned reading selections:

_____ excels at grade level _____ at grade level

_____ slightly below grade level _____ well below grade level; estimated grade level _____

2. Fluency (how well student recognizes words quickly, reads aloud)

_____ fluent: little or no problem recognizing words, reading aloud without stumbling or repeated hesitation

_____ mixed: some difficulties recognizing words, reading aloud

_____ halting: problems recognizing words and reading aloud severe enough to interfere with comprehension

3. Comprehension

_____ critical analysis: able to use criteria to evaluate quality of reading selection, analyze logical arguments

_____ interpretation: able to understand what author has said, including making inferences from background knowledge and selection, but not usually including critical analysis

_____ literal meaning: can remember details and factual information, but usually unable to make logical inferences

_____ problematic: problems even in understanding and remembering literal details

Teacher observations/comments regarding student's demonstrated ability to read at grade level:

***Thanks to Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools for sharing the model for this form.**

Advocating for Student
Cover Sheet for Mathematics Work Samples
Third Grade Promotion Portfolio*

Student: _____ Teacher: _____

Include items listed below

_____ Problem solving and mathematical reasoning: sample must demonstrate ability to solve word problems

_____ Interpretation of graph

_____ Third grade district-level computation assessment

Teacher rating of attached samples

Check this student's typical level of performance in mathematics by the end of the school year (last month/nine weeks) as illustrated by the attached samples.

1. Grade level performance (within mathematics class)

_____ excels at grade level _____ at grade level

_____ slightly below grade level _____ well below grade level; estimated grade level _____

2. Fluency in computation (addition, subtraction, and multiplication) **without assistance of manipulatives and/or calculators**

_____ strong: quick and accurate across all strands and applications

_____ mixed: inaccuracies or laborious computation in some operations and/or applications

_____ problematic: problems in quick, accurate computation significantly interfere with problem-solving and application

3. Problem-solving across strands

_____ proficient; usually able to apply mathematical concepts and procedures to solve a variety of problems across strands

_____ mixed: able to apply mathematical concepts and procedures to some problems across some strands, but inconsistent performance, difficulty with some essential concepts and procedures

_____ problematic: limited ability to apply mathematical concepts and procedures across most strands

Teacher observations/comments regarding student's demonstrated ability to do mathematics at grade level

***Thanks to Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools for sharing the model for this form.**

Eighth Grade Promotion Portfolio
Required Student Achievement Data

Student: _____ **Teacher:** _____

Check each enclosure attached.

1: **Summarize EOG results below**

	Reading EOG	Mathematics EOG
Grade Level/School Year	**Scale Score Level**	**Scale Score Level**
Eighth Grade/		
Seventh Grade/		
Sixth Grade/		

2. _____ 1999-2000 Report card grades (most recent SIMS card)

3. _____ Writing portfolio summary and attached samples (minimum of two unassisted samples)

   1) persuasive letter
   2) an autobiographical sample
   3) writing sample selected by student

4. _____ Seventh grade writing score

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